Vol. VIII. Numb. 46.

THE OBSERVATOR.

More Thoughts on employing our own Poor, and the Palatines *lately come over; with an Anſwer to the grand Objections to the Naturalization-Act on that Account. An Eſſay towards the Computation of Acres in* Britain *and* Ireland, *and how many* per *Head, according to the Number of the Inhabitants; which demonſtrates, that we are capable of employing four times the Number of our People. The Increaſe of the general Rental within* England *the laſt* 100 *Years. On the Care the Government has taken of the* Palatines, *and how they may be employ'd. On the Neceſſity of improving our Navigation and Trade. On a Book lately publiſh'd by* B. Bragge, *entitl'd,* The Navy Royal, *&c.*

From **Wednesday**, July 6. to **Saturday**, July 9. 1709.

Country-m. I Want to have ſome Diſcourſe with you, Maſter, about employing our own numerous Poor, and the many Foreigners that are already come, or may yet come over, which ſtill occaſions Clamours againſt the Naturalization-Act by unreaſonable People, which are fomented by the common Enemies of our Peace.

Obſ. I am ready to do all that's in my Power for the Service of the Publick, *Roger*. While the Naturalization-Act was on foot, I urg'd what I thought was proper to promote it, which gave Satisfaction to Men of Senſe, that ſtudy'd the Welfare of the Nation: And I am ſo far from thinking, that I was in the Wrong, notwithſtanding the coming over of ſo many poor *Palatines*, that I am rather confirm'd in my Judgment, as to the Benefit of that Act, tho' I readily own, that I did not apprehend that ſo many poor People could ever have thought of making any Benefit by it, and that I conceiv'd it would rather have been ſuch as had Stocks to improve, who might be induc'd to come hither on that Account, conſidering the Happineſs of our Conſtitution, would we keep to it, the Extent and comparative Fruitfulneſs of our Territories, the large Compaſs of our Trade, and the abundance of our native Commodities for enlarging it much more, were there proper Methods taken to encourage it. Nor am I yet without Hopes, that as there are among thoſe *Palatines*, if I be rightly inform'd, Men of tolerable Subſtance, we may in a little Time hear of no ſmall Numbers of ſuch that will be encourag'd by our Naturalization-Act, to come and ſettle among us.

Country-m. I wiſh they may, Maſter. But in the mean Time, I ſhould be glad you would enable me to anſwer a common Objection, which I find in the Mouths of a great many, *viz.* That we don't want People, but have rather too many, for any Thing we have to do for them.

Obſ. I dare be bold to ſay, *Roger*, the Men who talk ſo, never ſtudy'd either the Condition or Intereſt of our Country, nor ſpent a quarter of an Hour in political Arithmetick during their whole Lives; otherwiſe they would not make ſuch a trifling and unjuſt Objection. To convince you of this, *Roger*, I ſhall quote you ſome Things from Dr. *Davenant*'s *Eſſay upon the probable Methods of making People Gainers in the Ballance of Trade*, a Subject that deſerves the moſt ſerious Study, and intenſe Application of the Greateſt Men in any Government, who muſt one Day anſwer the too general Neglect of it to God by whoſe Providence they are advanc'd, if not ſome Time or other to the Nation.

Country-m. Pray let me hear it, Maſter.

Obſ. He tells us, Sect. 3. *Roger*, from the exact Schemes of the ingenious Mr. *King*, *Lancaſter* Herald, that *England* and *Wales* contain 39 Millions of Acres; to which we may add, without Breach of Modeſty, that *Scotland*, with its Iſlands, which are betwixt 3 and 400, and the Kingdom of *Ireland*, contain at leaſt as many more, which make 78 Millions. He ſuppoſes the Number of People in *England* to be 5 Millions and a half, and if we allow *Scotland* and *Ireland* two Millions betwixt 'em, which I believe is too great a Proportion, not for the Extent of Ground, but in Conſideration of *England*'s Populouſneſs and Trade, that makes but 7 Millions and a half, which is above ten Acres *per* Head, of which they compute there are but ſeven and a quarter *per* Head in *England*, becauſe it is moſt populous; and, according to the above-mention'd Proportion of People and Land, it makes eighteen Acres *per* Head in *Scotland* and *Ireland*: By which it appears, to a Demonſtration, *Roger*, that our Dominions in *Europe*, beſides what we have in *America*, are capable of maintaining above four times the Number of our People, according to the Proportion in *Holland*, where they have not above three Acres and three quarters *per* Head by common Computation.

Country-m. That proves the Objection, of our having too many People already, to be trifling and unjuſt with a Witneſs, Maſter, and ought for ever to ſtop the Mouths of thoſe who clamour againſt our Naturalization-Act.

Obſ. But I will tell you more, *Roger*; that ſame Author computes there are in *England* and *Wales*, 10 Millions of Acres in Heaths, Moors, Mountains, and barren Land, 3 Millions in Woods and Coppices, and 3 Millions in Forreſts, Parks, and Commons; which Diviſion, Dr. *Davenant* ſays, ſeems to be made with great Judgment; 1. Becauſe it agrees well with the Conſumption of ſeveral Commodities, which we may know pretty near by the Exciſes now in being. 2. Becauſe it correſponds exactly with the Increaſe obſerv'd in the general Rental of the Kingdom, theſe laſt 100 Years, from the Produce of divers Land-Taxes, and ſeveral other Particulars; the general Rental of the Nation in 1600, not exceeding 6 Millions *per Annum*, but thro' the Wealth that has flow'd in upon us by foreign Trade, it has advanc'd in ſeveral Periods, from 6 to 8, from 8 to 10, and from 10 to 14 Millions *per Annum*. That when the general Rental of *England* was but 6 Millions *per Annum*, there was a great deal more barren Land; of that which was cultivated, very much was capable of Melioration, and there were more Forreſts, Woods, Coppices, Commons, and waſte Grounds, than there is now, which our Wealth did enable us from Time to Time to incloſe, cultivate, and improve.

Country-m. Well, Maſter, you have fully ſatisfy'd me as to the Weakneſs of the Objection, that we have too many People, and of the Unreaſonableneſs of the Clamours againſt the Act of Naturalization, becauſe of the coming over of ſo many *Palatines*, &c. This is likewiſe a ſufficient Anſwer to the Objection of improving and incloſing Waſtes and Commons, ſince the better our Country is improv'd, the fewer Poor we ſhall have to need the Uſe of them; for I am ſure the Cottagers may earn three times more by Day-labour in cultivating thoſe Waſtes, than by having a Cow or a Horſe, or a few Sheep running upon them: Of which, the Advancement of the Rental of *England* in 100

Years Time, from 6 to 14 Millions *per Annum*, is an undeniable Demonſtration; and ſince that vaſt Increaſe of Induſtry has been chiefly encourag'd by the Wealth we have had from our foreign Trade, 'tis a convincing Argument to prove, that not only thoſe at the Helm, but our Landed Gentlemen, and Members of Parliament, ſhould apply themſelves chiefly to protect, encourage, and enlarge our Trade by a good Adminiſtration, and ſuitable Laws; and ſince, as I am inform'd, the *Palatines* are accounted the beſt Huſband-men in *Germany*, which appear'd by the Improvement of their own Country, before it was ruin'd by the *French*, and that the People were diſpirited by the Hardſhips they underwent from Prieſts and Popiſh Counſellors, on the Account of Religion, certainly they may be made vaſtly uſeful to the Nation, by helping to improve thoſe Millions of Acres in *Great Britain*, which are capable of it, had we Honeſty or Wiſdom enough to ſet about it.

Obſ. I doubt not, *Roger*, but God will bleſs her Majeſty and her Miniſters, who have taken ſo much Care of them already; and ſince the Government has appointed Truſtees for receiving and diſpoſing the Money to be collected for their Subſiſtence and Settlement, and that thoſe Truſtees are ready to receive Propoſals for employing and ſetting them, I hope our money'd Men will lay hold of this Opportunity to think of improving their Cash that Way; and ſince much the greater Number of them are Huſband-men, it would ſeem moſt natural to ſettle them in a Colony or Colonies for improving of Land, by a Corporation of Subſcribers, as I formerly mention'd, which may be empower'd for a competent Number of Years, to appoint Overſeers, who at the ſame Time may be their Magiſtrates to govern them, according to our Laws, gather in the Rents of their Houſes and Farms, and to diſpoſe of the Product of their Labour, after deducting their neceſſary Maintenance, for reimburſing the Money that ſhall be found neceſſary over and above what is collected by Brief for their Settlement and Subſiſtance, and that they may be laid under ſuch Covenants, and for ſuch a Time, as ſhall be found convenient to ſecure the Subſcribers. This cannot be reckon'd any Hardſhip upon the *Palatines*, conſidering, that none of our *Weſt India* Planters, from whom it would ſeem they had the greateſt Proſpect of Employment, either could or would have employ'd 'em, but under ſuch Covenants as might have ſecur'd themſelves.

Country-m. I like your Propoſal hugely, Maſter, and cannot but obſerve, by the ſmall Number of Tradeſmen and Mechanicks among 'em, that the Clamour of our own People of that Sort, as if they would be undone by the coming over of ſo many foreign Mechanicks and Tradeſmen, was very ill founded; for if once they be ſettl'd in Colonies, it will ſoon appear that they will be able to employ more of thoſe Trades, than came along with them; which will be an Advantage, inſtead of any Damage to our own Tradeſmen.

Obſ. I am fully of your Opinion, *Roger*; but at the ſame Time I muſt tell you, that in order to employ thoſe Foreigners and our own Poor, there ought to be ſpecial Care taken to protect and enlarge our Navigation and Trade; for without that, we ſhall be ſo far from being in a Condition to entertain Foreigners, that we cannot be able to maintain and employ our own Poor, the Increaſe of whom is chiefly owing to the Decay of our Trade, occaſion'd by a long and expenſive War; and ſuch Miſmanagement, with Reſpect to our Fleet and Navigation, as are too well known to be deny'd, and have been loudly and frequently complain'd of by our noble Patriots, the Lords, in their Addreſſes to the Government; and tho' we have Reaſon to hope, that in due Time thoſe Things will be reliev'd, as it will certainly require Time and extraordinary Application to bring Things to Rights, that have ſo long gone wrong, yet on this Occaſion I cannot but take Notice of a ſmall Book newly publiſh'd by *B. Bragge*, entitl'd, *The Navy Royal*, &c. *containing a few Thoughts about Manning our Ships of War with the beſt of Sailors, without Violence, and in the moſt pleaſing Manner*; in which Book there are abundance of notorious and crying Abuſes in our Fleet hinted at, that deſerve to be enquir'd into, and ſpeedily redreſs'd, tho' I think the Author has indulg'd his comical Humour too much, in treating on a Subject of ſuch Weight and Importance; but perhaps he thought that the beſt Way to have what he ſays taken Notice of, and had that Sentence of the Poet in his Eye, *Ridenti dicere verum quis vetat*; which may anſwer to our *Engliſh* Proverb, *That ſometimes there's a great deal of Truth ſpoke in Jeſt.* A true Jeſt is always moſt biting, *Roger*, but it may ſometimes be of Uſe, if thoſe who find themſelves touch'd by it, take Care to avoid giving Occaſion for it. But more of theſe Things another Time.

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